

# IDAHO'S STUDENT TRANSPORTATION COMMUNICATOR BUS BUZZ



Volume 1, Issue 2

March 2007

## Special points of interest:

- State Board Meeting in Moscow on April 19.
- IWG Meeting in Lewiston on April 10.
- Supervisor's Meeting Summaries by Region.
- Poster contest deadline is May 4.
- Children's Choice School Bus Driver of the Year deadline is July 16.

## Inside this issue:

Kurt Grover	2
Tech Workshops	2
Jay Dye	3
Calling All Drivers	4
IAPT	5
Safety Bus Competition	5
Don't Leave One Behind	6
Railroad Crossing	7
School Bus Fatalities	7

## Message from the Director:

I think it's safe to say that as a supervisor you never want to see a good team member leave your team. It could adversely affect your whole program and at the very least disrupt your day-to-day operation until a replacement is



found, trained, and has a chance to settle into their new surroundings. That is the situation my staff and I are currently dealing with now the loss of a team member as well as a friend. Due to family obligations,

Jerry Abbott has tendered his resignation to the State Department of Education effective April 2, 2007. Jerry will be sorely missed by all of us here. Any questions or concerns normally directed to Jerry should be directed to Brad Jensen until further notice.

— Ray Merical

## Board Rule

As reported in the last Bus Buzz the Pending Rule was adopted by the State Board of Education on November 1, 2006. It was presented to and approved by the Senate and House Education Committees shortly after the beginning of the 2007 Legislative session. Since the rule has not been approved, rejected, amended or modified by concurrent resolution in accordance with Idaho Code it will become final and effective at the conclusion of the current legislative session. However the modified reimbursement/non-reimbursement matrix portion of the rule will become effective July 1, 2007. This is due to the effects an immediate change would have had on reimbursement claims submitted and processed for the current fiscal year. *RM*

## What Makes Your School Bus Driver Special?

The wheels on the school bus go round and round to the tune of about 4 billion miles and 10 million round trips each year. Even with all those miles, school buses have a safety record unequalled in the transportation industry. That's why in 2006, as part of the company's 90th anniversary celebration, Thomas Built Buses created the national "Children's Choice School Bus Driver of the Year"

—cont. page 9

## SIST(e)R — COMING SOON

It is almost that time again. The School Bus Run, Inventory/Odometer, and Stop Arm Violation Reports are due on July 17. In the past, completing these reports has not been an easy process, but today I have great news. It is with much excitement that I introduce to you the System for Idaho School Transportation Reporting, also known as SIST(e)R. SIST(e)R is an online reporting system designed to

make completing these reports less confusing and more uniform throughout the state. For the most part, the reports are set up very similar to the excel spreadsheets previously used. The good news is that you will now be filling out and submitting these reports online. It will no longer be necessary for districts to save the template, input the data, and resend

—continued on page 10

## Kurt Grover

Kurt Grover of Sugar City, Idaho died January 31, 2007, at the age of 54. If you know Sugar City, you knew Kurt. He has been the school crossing guard for the Sugar-Salem School District for the past 13 ½ years. Kurt was born with chromosomal damage, but it did not affect his ability to get the kids safely across State Highway 33 that runs through Sugar City. He took his job seriously. It was very special to him, and he would refer to the children as his kids. He was on a first-name basis with all the kids, and they loved him and trusted him to get them across the street. He never missed a day, even during blizzards, rain storms, or freezing temperatures. He was very dedicated, and was just like clockwork, never a

minute late. He was a friend to everyone, including those who were home bound, often picking up their mail and sharing with them the latest news. Getting the children to and from school is nothing new for the Grover family. His dad, Lawrence Grover, was the Transportation Supervisor for the Sugar-Salem School District for nearly thirty years. His brother Matt Grover stepped into his father's foot steps and is the current transportation supervisor. Kurt would always check in at the bus shop to make sure everything was running smoothly, and say hello to his friends and the bus drivers. Kurt received an award from the Sugar City Council a few years ago, that included a trophy engraved with,

"The Best Crosswalk Guard in the State of Idaho." He was very proud of that award. He was an icon in his little red moped. Kurt will be greatly missed, especially by the school students, and we know that Sugar City will never be the same.

—Sugar-Salem SD



## Technicians Workshop Registration

Registration for this year's Technicians Workshops will be \$125 per technician for three full days of class. Classes will include ABS brakes, High Pressure Hydraulic Brakes, Air Brakes, IC Multiplex Wiring, Thomas Online Tech

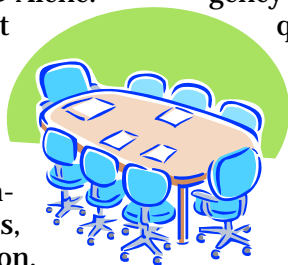
**Registration Forms  
available on the SDE  
School  
Transportation  
Web-Site.**

Support, a general maintenance class, and more. The exact location of the workshops has yet to be confirmed; however, it will be in the

Boise area. We will inform all attendees in sufficient time to make travel and lodging arrangements. The workshop is scheduled for July 17-19, from 8a.m. to 5p.m. each day. If you have any questions, please call Doug Scott at (208) 543-4566, Brad Jensen or Amanda Salazar at (208) 322-6851. —RM

## Region I & II Supervisor Meetings

Region I Supervisors meet on March 8, 2007 in Coeur D'Alene. Region II Supervisors met on March 7, 2007 in Lewiston. They went over the agenda from the Steering Committee. Some discussion topics included the P-25, Basic Bus, and maximum depreciation.



New business included an emergency phone tree and a request for information on software or diagnostic for school buses.

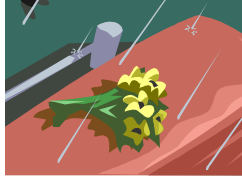
—Cliff Mooney/  
Virginia Overland

## Help Wanted

- Cassia County SD is looking to hire a diesel school bus/automotive technician/mechanic. Interested persons can apply online at [www.sd151.k12.id.us](http://www.sd151.k12.id.us).
- Lake Pend Oreille SD is looking to hire a school bus mechanic. For more information visit [www.sd84.k12.id.us/](http://www.sd84.k12.id.us/).

## Jay Dye

The Firth School District has lost a dedicated mechanic, great driver, good friend, and beloved actor. Jay Dye began working with the Firth School District in July of 1977 as a bus mechanic. A few years later, he took on the role of transportation supervisor. Over the last 29 years, he had the opportunity to interact with teachers, coaches, superintendents, students, and parents in many different situations. He had a wonderful sense of humor and got along well with others which certainly helped in his job. When someone would say, "I hit the mirror on the post, and it needs a new mirror," or "I forgot to get the door clear up and backed through it," or "I forgot to shut the roof hatch, and it is no longer there," his response was,



"Okay, let's go see what we can do to fix it." One side of Jay that many may not have known began by a visit to his bus shop from Merrill Barney, the drama director. He walked into the bus garage and said, "I need a favor." The school was producing the musical "Music Man" and the man playing Mayor Shinn had to bow out, so Barney asked Jay if he could step in. Jay agreed and let's just say "the Dye" was Cast". From then on, he played many characters over the next 15 years. Some included Tevye in "Fiddler on the Roof", Daddy Warbucks in "Annie", the King in "The King and I", and Adam in "Seven Brides for Seven Brothers". He also coached football at the middle school for several years. Jay usually drove the bus to the away games for

his teams. He also drove other activity buses during his 29 years, many including his own children's activities. Jay always enjoyed going to the state meeting and visiting with the other transportation directors discussing different school concerns and how they handled situations. Some of the little things he commented on were "Train the Trainer" meetings at Louie's, judging the bus rodeo competition, and meeting other people's families. He made many friends over the years from these "one-time-a-year" get-togethers. He always appreciated the camaraderie he had with other transportation directors when it came to helping each other out if a situation arose while buses were visiting other schools

— continued on page 10

## Region III Supervisor Meeting

The Region III Supervisor Meeting was held in Nampa on March 15, and was attended by seventeen regional supervisors and three student transportation employees. All topics from the February 22 Steering Committee meeting were discussed during the two-hour meeting. The group was in favor of the proposed survey to help identify all railroad crossings by DOT identification number and the specific railroad in charge of each crossing. The

survey will also include the number of school buses that crosses each crossing on a daily basis by district. The Operation Lifesaver and School Bus Watch Programs were both discussed and endorsed by the group. I explained to the group that even the districts with no railroad crossings can benefit from Operation Lifesaver training because of activity and field trips to other districts. If a district has already participated in a Highway Watch program they

should still take the School Bus Watch program, which was designed specifically for school bus drivers. They will also receive their state School Bus Watch ID card after taking the course. The new In-house School Transportation Safety Awareness Program was well received. We received a good response in regards to this year's Train the Trainer Workshops which will include a session on emergency

—continued on page 10

## A Change in Time

Spring is finally here and along with spring comes daylight saving-time. Spring triggers safety issues for our industry. Shadows begin to appear from behind trees and buildings, glaring sunlight shines through windshields, motorists hurry to reach work/school and watching out for students does not seem to be

quite as important. This time of the year also means more school buses on the road to accommodate competitions, visits to the State Legislature and other spring field trips. It can be a bit overwhelming, but we should all remember that our main goal is a safe trip to and



from school every day. We all need to be watching out for the added unexpected events that can creep up on us during these busy times of the year. It all revolves around that precious cargo we transport every day.

—Doug Scott

## Region IV Supervisor Meeting

The Region IV Supervisor Meeting was held in Twin Falls on March 6, 2007. The turnout and response to this meeting was felt to be the best yet. There was no interest in having a regional meeting during the summer months when school is not in session. An alternate Steering Committee member for each region to fill in when the standing member cannot attend the meeting was discussed. It was discussed and requested the withdrawal from standards regulations be reviewed for the possibility of allowing principals or some other designated school administrator to sign off a withdrawal form for the superintendent. It was also requested that we review anti-lock brake withdrawal criteria for tagging a bus when the malfunction

light comes on since CDL manual page 4B-14 states "Remember if you have ABS malfunctions, you still have regular brakes. Drive normally, but get the system serviced soon." A great deal of discussion took place in regards to railroad crossings and flashing lights. There was a bit of grumbling about completing the crossing survey, but no one said they would not complete it. The run report was brought up again with the recommendation to get rid of it if it is not going to be used for any practical reason. The development of the transit basic bus and depreciation were discussed with little input. I reminded everyone that e-mail address changes should be sent to SDE as soon as possible to continue uninterrupted communications between districts,

contractors, and SDE. Several attendees asked why they had not received their School Bus Watch ID cards yet. Doug Scott explained why and that SDE would be issuing Idaho School Bus Watch ID cards for each individual that attended the SDE training. The topic of sex offenders living near bus stops was raised, but there was no discussion. White Cloud Communications discussed the two-way radio regulations, and how they will effect school districts. Train the Trainer and Tech Workshops were discussed with very little comment. The use of cell phones while driving the bus was discussed and some thought it was necessary as that was their only

—continued on page 10

## Region V & VI Supervisor Meeting

The Region V & VI Supervisor Meeting was held at Bonneville School District office on March 6, 2007. We discussed the Madison School District bus accident, and how quickly an accident can happen when you are caught looking in your rearview mirror. I reported on how we are dealing with the harassment issues on our Island Park bus route. Since the meeting, our district has held a meeting with the parents from the Island Park area

and discussed placing monitors on two Island Park buses. The parents have been very supportive of our efforts in getting the students to show more respect for themselves as well as those around them. We discussed ensuring that all drivers from Regions V and VI are certified in the School Bus Watch Program as soon as possible. The problems with a flag person at railroad crossings with flashing



lights that would not deactivate was discussed in detail. A memo in regards to the problem is being prepared by SDE and is on page 7. Depreciation and the rapidly rising cost of school buses were discussed. The proper identification and marking of emergency equipment storage compartments was explained and discussed. It was brought up that lifetime sports were

—continued on page 10

## Calling All Drivers. Don't Pick Up

A recent publication recommended a total ban on the use of cell phones by School Bus Drivers. School bus drives may soon have to put away their cell phones while driving a bus except in cases of an emergency. An accident involving a motor coach trying to put a 12-foot bus under a 10-foot 2-inch bridge while talking on a cell phone has put school buses back in



the limelight again. The driver, who was talking on a hands-free phone, failed to change into an adjacent left lane with a 13-foot 4-inch clearance prior to crashing into the bridge. He reported that he failed to see the posted warning signs and eleven students were injured in the crash. The National Transportation Safety Board recom-

mends that the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration and all state, prohibit commercial drivers license holders with passenger-carrying or school bus endorsements from talking on cell phones while driving. Districts are encouraged to assess their local policies and procedures to avoid a potential problem in their school transportation program. —V. Overland



# Message from the IAPT Vice President:

Once again, it is time to consider and recognize drivers, aides, secretaries, and technicians who have provided service above and beyond the normal expectations. Traditionally, these employees are honored during the vendor show at the State Convention. In addition to recognition by their peers, Q'Straint, manufacturers of securement and restraint systems for those confined to mobility devices, will recognize teams of Special Needs drivers and aides. Their recognition will be in the form of a \$50 check for the driver and the aides along with a plaque. Runners-up will receive a recognition letter and a gift

***Nomination forms  
available on the SDE  
School  
Transportation  
Website.***

from Q'Straint. In the past, we have only recognized the Special Needs driver. This year we felt recognition of the aides would be appropriate. Please take some time and recognize your employees. Nomination forms are available on the SDE School Transportation Website under the IAPT link. Nomination forms must be received by May 10, 2007. Mail to IAPT Awards, c/o Ron Smith, Jefferson Joint School District #251, 504 N. 3500 E., Lewisville, Idaho 83421. Nominations for Special Needs Driver and Aides need to be on official

school district or contractor letterhead and must be signed by the transportation director and the highest level administrator in the organization. If you have any questions, please contact Ron Smith, [rsmith@d251.k12.id.us](mailto:rsmith@d251.k12.id.us) or 208-754-8211.  
—Ron Smith

## Inhalers

Who is responsible for a student's inhaler? The student is. "Self Administration" means a student's use of medication is pursuant to a prescription or written direction from a physician. If applicable, a student shall keep inhaler within reach for emergency purposes and protection.  
—V. Overland

## Recall Notice

Thomas recall 06V – 496 involves certain Thomas C-2 units manufactured from December 21, 2005 through September 4, 2006. The defect involves the school bus stop arm assembly. If you have questions or concerns, please contact your Thomas dealer.



## Bright Idea

Our Poster Contest coordinator Diana Nordin came up with a great idea. She removed a photo of last year's national winner that was in one of the transportation magazines and had it enlarged several times to actual poster size. She had the picture duplicated and made several large banners to hang in the schools. The banners really look great and should get the students thinking about the poster contest. We hope that it gives them an idea of what a winning poster might look like.  
—Cliff Mooney

# WANTED!

## School Bus Safety Poster Contest

[www.napt.org](http://www.napt.org) (Kids Stop)

Deadline: May 4, 2007

Send To: Linda Braswell c/o Kuna  
Transportation, 711 W.  
Porter, Kuna, ID 83634

# Idaho State School Bus Safety Competition

The Safety Competition is being held this year on June 25 at Lake City High School in Coeur d'Alene. Registration will be from 7 to 8 am. Please e-mail or call in the names of all



eligible drivers competing at the state level as soon as possible so that packets of registration information and competition regulations can be sent. For more information or additional copies of regulations for this year's competition, please call or e-mail Darrell Rickard – Competition Coordinator

[drickard@lakeland272.org](mailto:drickard@lakeland272.org) Susie Moore – Assistant Coordinator  
[smoore@lakeland272.org](mailto:smoore@lakeland272.org)

Lakeland School District #272

Attn: Transportation, PO Box 39,  
Rathdrum, ID 83858  
(208) 687-0221 - Fax: (208)  
687-9705  
— Ron Smith

# Don't Leave One Behind

In the School Bus Fleet magazine, dated January 8, 2007, another article was printed about a student who was left on the bus. To compound matters this time, it was a special needs student. No matter how much training we do or how many times we emphasize the importance of checking our bus every time we finish a route, we continually hear or read about a student being left on a bus. The really sad part of the whole thing is the consequences that normally result from an act that is so easy to prevent: Trauma and possible injury to a

student, disciplinary action and possible termination for the driver and even lawsuits against the

district, contractor or driver. I wanted to share my thought with you, if for no other reason, just as a reminder of what can happen if we don't all do our jobs each and every time we transport a bus load of stu-

dents. I can not emphasize enough the importance of checking your bus after every route. Just one instance of leaving a student on the bus would be devastating to everyone involved. Yes, I realize we are all professionals and have been in this business long enough to know our jobs. I also know that there are districts and contractors that have excellent programs designed to prevent this from happening in their districts. I am still asking each and every one of you to not let yourself or your

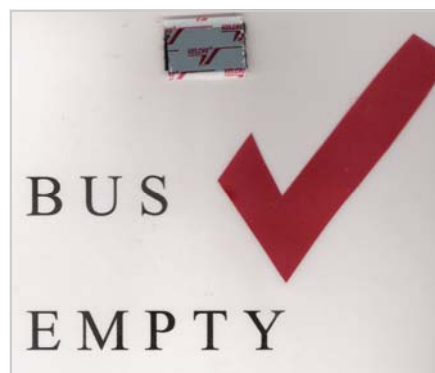
drivers become so complacent or get into such a hurry that a bus fails to get checked and a student is left on the bus. We must continually

remind ourselves of the importance of our job and that our children are truly the most precious cargo of all. Paula Davis, a school bus driver trainer from the Burley SD, came up with a great way to ensure none

of the Burley drivers ever leave a student on the bus. Paula designed a sign that the driver attaches in the rear window of each bus (with Velcro) at the end of each route after checking each seat for students.

The district does not allow a bus to be driven with the sign in the win-

dow and the buses can be easily checked at the end of each route to ensure



each bus has a sign in the designated window. The signs are printed on card stock using a reflective red checkmark and then laminated for durability. A small piece of Velcro is then attached to each sign and school bus window it is to be displayed in. If you have any questions, Paula can be contacted at (208)878-6622.

—Brad Jensen/Ray Merical

*"The really sad part of the whole thing is the consequences that normally result from an act that is so easy to prevent."*



## School Bus Fatalities

The National School Bus Loading and Unloading Survey reported 13 school bus-related fatalities in the 2005 – 2006 school year. Idaho was fortunate again to have had no school bus-related fatalities for the school year. As we (SDE staff) travel throughout Idaho, we continually hear of close calls between school children and school buses or other vehicles. In most instances the other vehicles ran a school bus stop sign and overhead warning light

### ASE Testing

There will be no summer ASE school bus-related tests.

The next regularly scheduled ASE school bus test will be Fall 2007 with a registration deadline of September 30. Testing dates will be November 8, 13, and 15 at all testing outlets.

—RM



system. We all need to thank the school bus drivers and trainers for the professionalism they demonstrate day after day to help ensure the close calls do not become injuries and fatalities. Kudos for a job well done! We, at the State Department of Education Student Transportation, feel that we have the best drivers and trainers in the United States. As fatalities continue to occur throughout the country we, as student transportation specialists, must never let down our guard and always remain vigilant. We must watch out for each and every student riding our buses as well as the other guy who so many times can't seem to see that great big yellow school bus with all the flashing lights stopped to load or unload students. Even one Idaho school bus-related fatality is one too many. We need to make everyone aware of the dangers involved with transporting students. Every day we need to remind ourselves and each

other to watch out for our children. Watch for the child who is running to the bus, the child who disembarks from the bus and does not stop to look, and for the child who dropped something and is still in the danger zone. Test your knowledge, answer the questions from the quiz on page 9. We will print the answers in our next newsletter, which will give you plenty of time to research the questions. Information for and the answers to this quiz were obtained from the 2005 – 2006 National School Bus Loading and Unloading Survey. The report was compiled by the Kansas State

Department of Education. Limited quantities of this document are available by contacting: Kansas State Department of Education School

Bus Safety Education Unit, SE 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue Topeka, Kansas 66612-1182 or [wcrabtree@ksde.org](mailto:wcrabtree@ksde.org)

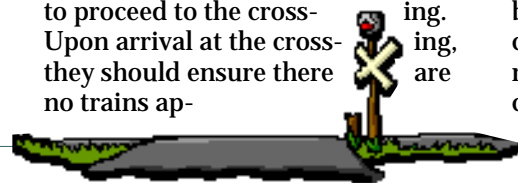
—Brad Jensen

**Test your  
knowledge!  
Take the quiz on  
page 9.**

## Railroad Crossings and Flashing Red Lights

It has come to our attention that districts are experiencing difficulties with railroad crossings marked with red flashing lights and no crossing arms where the lights do not stop flashing. It should be noted that if there is a problem with the crossing light system they are designed to start flashing and continue to do so until the problem is repaired. This is a safe mode to ensure they are flashing during the approach of a train, which means there is a possibility the lights could be flashing when there is no train approaching the crossing. Operation Lifesaver and, in most instances, school bus driver trainers instruct school bus drivers not to cross a railroad crossing while its red lights are flashing. The driver should contact the district and ask

to have a law enforcement officer, a uniformed railroad employee or someone appointed by the district to proceed to the crossing. Upon arrival at the crossing, they should ensure there are no trains ap-



proaching and when safe to do so, wave the bus over the crossing. The problem lies with getting law enforcement or the railroad in charge of the crossing to send someone out to act as a flagman for the bus. In some instances, the railroad company in charge of the crossing is miles away and it is not feasible for them to get someone to the crossing in a time frame that would help the district. In the instance of law en-

forcement, they also may be too far away, too busy or just not ready to assume the liability of assisting a bus load of students over a railroad crossing. The following codes and regulations all pertain to Railroad crossing and flashing lights.

"Operation of school buses." 1. All school buses shall at all times be operated in conformity with law and with rules and regulations of the department of law enforcement and the State Board of Education. 2. No school bus shall: a. Cross any railroad track, or enter or cross any arterial highway without first coming to a full stop. If any such crossing, intersection or access be obscured by trees, buildings or other object, or because of wind, storm or fog, the chauffeur shall open such windows

—continued on pg. 8

# *Railroad Crossings and Flashing Red Lights*

and doors as will permit him to determine when it is safe to proceed. (Idaho Code 33-1508) "Obedience to signal indicating approach of train." 1. Whenever any person driving a vehicle approaches a railroad grade crossing under any of the circumstances stated in this section, the driver shall stop within fifty (50) feet but not less than fifteen (15) feet from the nearest rail of the railroad, and shall not proceed until he can do so safely. These requirements shall apply when: (a) A clearly visible electric or mechanical signal device gives warning of the immediate approach of a railroad train. (Idaho Code 49-648) "All school and activity buses shall stop at all railroad grade crossings in accordance with the law (33-1508; 49-648 and 49-

649 Idaho Codes). The State Department of Education shall develop and maintain railroad grade crossing training curriculum, the basis of which shall be in conformity with nationally recognized procedures. (SISBO page 70) The problem was discussed at the February Student Transportation Steering Committee meeting by committee members and Operation Lifesaver personnel at which time it was determined that a change in Statute would not solve the problem. It was also decided that SDE and Idaho Operation Lifesaver would jointly issue the following recommendation. It is strongly recommended that Idaho school buses do not cross any railroad grade crossing at which red crossing lights are flashing without

the aid of a flagman provided by law enforcement, the appropriate railroad company, local school district, or district contracted transportation provider unless all attempts to secure a flagman have failed. At which time it becomes the district's responsibility to determine who should allow the school bus to proceed over the crossing if an alternate routing of the bus is not feasible. It is also recommended that school districts develop a plan for contacting law enforcement or railroad companies to determine if a train is on the affected track and if there is, its location. Safety of our students and drivers should always be the greatest concern when dealing with any railroad crossing.

—Ray Merical

## ***Recommended Procedures at Highway Rail Intersections***

- At all highway rail intersections, follow the following procedures prior to crossing railroad tracks.
- Turn on hazard lights at least 100 feet before stopping.
- Turn off 8-way light master switch if necessary to keep them from activating.
- Position bus in center of proper lane and stop no closer than 15 feet or more than 50 feet from nearest track.
- Open driver's window, entrance door and turn on Noise Suppression switch if applicable.
- Look and Listen, Look and Listen again.
- Close door.
- Proceed if clear, without shifting gears, until bus has cleared all tracks.
- Turn off hazard lights after bus has cleared last track, turn on 8-way master switch if necessary
- At passive highway rail intersections, ones with a crossbuck or crossbuck and stop sign, after stopping and following the above procedure, proceed if safe and no train is visible.
- At highway rail intersections with automatic warning devices, flashing lights or flashing lights and gates, after stopping, follow the above procedures. If lights or lights and gates are not activated, proceed.
- If flashing lights and gates are activated do not proceed, regardless if a train is present or not. If the crossing has flashing lights only that are activated and there is no train present, the recommendation of the State Department of Education – Pupil Transportation Steering Committee and Idaho Operation Lifesaver is do not proceed unless the crossing is flagged by a uniformed railroad employee, law enforcement officer or school official unless all attempts to secure a flagman have failed. At which time the driver should follow School District Policy.
- Always follow school district policy.



# What Makes Your Bus Driver Special? *Cont. from cover*

essay contest to recognize drivers everywhere.

"The industry knows how critically important the role of the bus driver is. But often the daily success of a safe and reliable trip is overlooked," says John O'Leary, president and CEO, Thomas Built Buses. "This is our way of saying thank you to bus drivers around the country for taking such good care of the precious cargo they carry."

With the help of their parents, children in kindergarten through sixth grade can nominate their favorite drivers by submitting a 90-word essay about what makes their driver so special.

The contest, now in its second year, runs through July 16, 2007, and will award the child who nominates the

winning driver with a \$1,000 educational savings bond and a laptop computer. The Children's Choice School Bus Driver of the Year will receive a \$1,000 Visa® gift card.

Entries can be entered with or without photos or illustrations by mailing them to:

## Children's Choice Essay Contest

**HMH**

**1435 W. Morehead Street.,  
Suite #140**

**Charlotte, NC 28208**

*School Bus Fleet* magazine editor  
Steve Hirano and Bob Ramsdell

senior vice president of Human Resources and Safety for Durham School Services, the third largest student transportation provider in the United States, will assist Thomas Built Buses representatives in judging entries. Winners will be notified and announced in September. "School bus drivers are a critical link in our pupil transportation system," says Hirano. "They make a difference in the lives of children all over the country. I am happy to help Thomas Built Buses honor these unsung heroes." All winners and runners-up will receive Thomas Built Buses jackets and Saf-T-Liner® C2 school bus lunch boxes. Winners will be featured on the Thomas Built Buses Web site and will be included in national and local publicity.

## Contest Rules

The contest begins March 1, 2007. All entries must be received by Monday, July 16, 2007. Abbreviated rules: Entries must include a 90-word essay about why the nominated driver should win. Photo inclusion is optional. Written entries should be typed or legibly printed on a single sheet of 8-1/2" X 11" paper. Photos and entries will not be returned.

All entries must include a completed entry form with the first and last name of the child and parent or legal guardian, home address, school name, contact phone number, a parent or legal guardian's signature approving participation and the full name of the driver, along with the school bus district they serve. Forms are available at



[www.thomasbus.com/contest](http://www.thomasbus.com/contest). Entries will be judged based on essay content, originality and driver qualifications.

To qualify for nomination, drivers must have been a school bus driver for at least five years and be in good standing with their employer.

To obtain an official set of rules or an entry form, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to: Children's Choice Essay Contest, HMH, 1435 W. Morehead

Street, Suite #140, Charlotte, NC 28208. For more information, visit [www.thomasbus.com/contest](http://www.thomasbus.com/contest).

## Calendar of Events

*April 10th— IWG Meeting in Lewiston*

*April 19 & 20th — State Board Meeting in Moscow*

*May 10 & 11 — State Board Meeting in Boise (Safety Busing)*

*June 14th — State Board Meeting in Cd'A (Cap Waivers)*

*June 25-28th — IAPT Summer Conference*

*July 16th — Children's Choice School Bus Driver of the Year deadline*

*July 17-19th — School Bus Tech. Workshop*

## **Jay Dye** — cont. from pg 3

even to the point of sending our students home in one of their buses, or our bus home with their students. Thank you! In April of 2006 Jay was diagnosed with multiple myeloma. Because of this aggressive cancer, he was unable to attend the summer meetings and he really felt bad that he could not be there. He passed away November 11, 2006. he always gave his best to his transportation responsibilities and his community. He will be missed very much. —P.W.

## **SIST(e)R** — cont. from pg 1

the document via e-mail or mail to SDE. Once the reports have been filled out and the “final submit” button is clicked, you are done. Also, SDE will no longer be re-entering the data provided by the district. By eliminating this process we hope to dramatically reduce the number of errors on these reports. If you and your district are interested in helping test this system, please contact Amanda Salazar via e-mail at [adsalazar@sde.idaho.gov](mailto:adsalazar@sde.idaho.gov). SIST(e)R will be available to all districts the second week of April. —Amanda Salazar

## **Supervisor Meeting Summaries** — cont.

(Region III cont.) evacuations and how to perform them. Cell phone usage and policies were also discussed along with the funding cap and waiver process due dates. In closing I requested that everyone keep us informed of changes to their contact information. The lack of good communication between SDE in some cases can be directly related to not having current e-mail addresses and phone numbers. —Jerry Abbott

(Region IV cont.) means of two-way communication. Everyone was reminded that safety busing reports are due March 31. It was mentioned that lifetime sports and field trips must be attached to curriculum and that SDE may ask districts to prove the curriculum when trying to determine allowable reimbursement. Everyone was reminded of the proposed rule changes and when they will go into effect. I.A.P.T. members discussed the summer conference and it was noted that Leon Robinson and the Burley School District would be hosting the Region IV safety competition this year. —Jack Hurd/Doug Scott

(Region V & VI cont.) considered reimbursable transportation only for high school students even though some PE teachers believe it should be for all students. Cell phone usage on school buses was discussed. Fremont County School District's policy is that if a driver receives or needs to make a call the bus is to be pulled off the road at a safe location and then the call can be made or received. Fremont County's students transportation policies mirror the bus riding rules provided by SDE to assist drivers in carrying them out. —Karen Daw/Hank Povey

# **School Bus Fatalities Quiz**

1. How many states reported a school bus-related fatality in the 2005 – 2006 school year?

2. Did the majority of deaths occur at the front or the rear of the bus?

3. What type of school bus was reported to have had the most fatalities?

4. How many school bus-related fatalities were caused by a vehicle passing a school bus?

5. Which caused the most vehicle-related fatalities: objects caught in a hand rail, objects caught in a closed door, objects dropped by a student or other?

6. Where did most school bus-related fatalities occur: going to

school, going home from school or on activity/field trips?

7. Instance where/when most fatalities occurred: running to bus stop A.M., getting off bus P.M., running from bus stop P.M., or School loading zone P.M.?

8. What days of the week did most fatalities occur on?

9. In what months did the majority of fatalities occur?

10. What were the most prevalent light conditions when most fatalities occurred?

11. What was the most prevalent

weather condition when most fatalities occurred?

12. What was the most prevalent road condition when most fatalities occurred?

### **Answers from the January Newsletter: Transportation Challenge**

1.) How much safer is the yellow school bus than mom/dad's car?  
Answer: D— 23 times

2.) How many school buses travel the nation's roads every day?  
Answer: D— 470,000

3.) How much cleaner are the exhaust emissions from a school bus built in 2007 compared to one built before 1990?  
Answer: D— 10 times as clean

